GPDE 5256A Wikis, Podcasts, and Online Learning for K-12 Classrooms

St. Mary’s University GPDE 5256

Implementation Plan

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Part I:

“Learning environments need to provide students a flexible structure within which students can experiment, collaborate, and problem solve. These are contexts that allow students to learn from both success and failure. Such open-ended environments, however, can be challenging to learners as well. They can appear chaotic and offer little guidance to students on how to navigate them (Mishra, 2013).” This quote changed my view on what a 21st century learner really means. The first thing that always came to mind is someone who uses technology to better his/her learning. After these six weeks, my definition of a 21st learner is completey different. I believe a 21st learner is someone who is able to think outside the box, challenge the way they think, and truly understand that there may be more than one way to find an answer or there is more than one answer. Being flexible, adaptable, and able to adjust to change is what a 21st learner really is.

I often find myself getting caught in a fixed mindset. Making a conscience effort to allow myself to become a 21st century learner is something that I have tried to do. Accepting and allowing myself as a teacher to realize that it is just as important for me to be a 21st century learner as it is the students to be a 21st century learner is a large hurdle to jump. That being said, once making that jump, I as a teacher have definitely entered the growth mindset state of mind.

Blooms Taxonomy can be broken down into three different domains, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. As a teacher, meeting these three different domains will allow us to push our students up the pyramid. Web 2.0 tools have allowed me to see a variety of ways to challenge my learners in these three domains. I am now able to use different types of technology, articles, and websites that are not only great sources for me, but great sources for my students.

Using *ipad applications in bloom's taxonomy,* will allow you to use different applications in your class that meet those three different domains. Once taking a good look at what the most important part of Bloom’s pyramid is, I have came to the conclusion that I personally believe that understanding and remembering are the two most important pieces. The reason for thinking this is because, if a student can truly understand and remember the content that he/she has learned, that student will then be able to teach and use the information in a real world setting. Having the skills to do this allows that student to be successful inside and outside of the classroom.

The picture below demonstrates different Web 2.0 tools that will allow me and my colleagues to push the students up the different domains. It shows variety, and helps make it clear to those who do not understand how Web 2.0 tools can affect Blooms Taxonomy. This picture has definitely helped me get a better understanding of how I can help my students and help colleagues push one another.



(Gasell, 2011)

The biggest difference that my students will see in my classroom is the type of questions being asked and the way, we as a class find solutions to different problems/questions. My learners will see an environment that is flexible to all students and will challenge everyone in a different way. The students will see that there will be more open-ended questions and will also notice that the answers that I am looking for with different questions will not be “black and white”. This class has helped me evolve my thinking as a teacher and is truly challenging the way I think and present information towards my students.

Part II:

Edmodo is a piece of technology that can offer many benefits. Some of the biggest benefits include the “sharing digital media such as blogs, links, videos, documents, notes, presentations etc..” (Creative, 2013). After reading this quote, I found myself with the biggest smile on my face that I have seen in a long time. I have been struggling to find ways to increase classroom collaboration, online networking, and different ways for me to easily give students information without having to make a ton of copies. Edmodo is a piece of technology that is a diamond in the rough. Edmodo allows us to do everything that I could possibly need for my classes. I will be using this to create class forums/discussions, journals, online projects, and homework. I am excited about this, because it will replace our expensive class booklets, the hundreds of pencils I buy for the students every year, and will save a great deal on paper. I cannot wait to implement this in my classes next fall.

Another tool that I will be using is Remind101. This does not sound like a huge piece of technology, but I do believe it will make a difference. After taking a poll last spring, I found that 86% of my 6th grade students have a cell phone and 100% of my students had someone in their family with a cell phone. Using Remind 101 will allow me to send out reminders and notifications of information that was communicated to each student in class. This will not really be replacing anything in my class right now, but it will be a great addition to the communication factor I have with my students in class.

Lastly, I will also implement Dropbox to my regiment. The main reason I am doing this is because it will allow me to become more organized and help keep my files in order. According to *A dozen benefits of dropbox file storage – and some caveats*, “dropbox will keep everything you save in a dropbox folder and is automatically copied, not only to “the cloud” but also to other devices connected to your account.” This will definitely help with my own personal well-being and allow me to stay on top of all my classes and coaching duties.

Using those three resources of technology will definitely help my classroom and increase learning. One struggle that I do have, is that being a Physical Education teacher, we are focusing on life-long fitness and do not spend a ton of time with technology. We try to focus on implementing activities that the students can learn to do when they are older and outside of school. Another one of my focuses is going to be teaching the students how to be 21st century learners without technology. Understanding the importance of teaching the four C’s is essential (Rfetter, 2012). Collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity are all items that I will teach my students. I do not need a computer to do this and I will still be teaching my students how to be 21st century learners.

Different road blocks and challenges that I will need to be prepared for is the availability of the different technology that I will need for this to be successful. I know that our school has plenty of computer labs for us to use, but I will need to incorporate time into our curriculum to give students who do not have access to computers, an ample amount of time to use the ones that we have. This should not be a big issue, I just need to make sure I am creative with how I schedule our units and the days that we use the computers in class. Another road block that I see may pop up is finding a consistent time to incorporate these resources each week. In our department, we do a lot of team teaching. There are many days, which I am teaching students who are not considered to be in my class. I will need to make sure that when implementing the online portion of Edmodo that I find ways each week to sit down with my students only and talk them through their weekly tasks.

Part III:

Before I get too crazy and go too far into my implementation plan, I need to talk with the other Physical Education teachers in the building. We do a lot of team teaching and I need to make sure I can get the approval to go forward with this. I do not foresee this being too much of an issue, due to the fact my coworkers are very supportive and love new ideas.

I am going to assess my students similarly to what I did this past year. The big change that I am going to make is by incorporating an online piece to my grading scale. The online piece in Edmodo will be a chunk of their overall percentage. I have not decided how much I want that chunk to be, but I do know that they will receive weekly points with completion of each online assignment. After doing this for an entire school year, I will have four different quarters to collect data from. After seeing my results at the end of the 2013-2014 school year, I will take a look at my data and modify and adjust from there. I picture this as something that will be changing every year and I will be able to adapt my assignments based on the type of learners I have in class. When recapping the data from each quarter, I will assess myself based on performance by the students and the type of deeper level answers that the students are giving. If I am not getting the type of answers and information that I want to see, then I know that I need to make changes. Weekly self reflections will be extremely important when going through the students’ information.

I will have specific criteria that I will be going off of while performing this implementation plan. I am going to make sure I see an increase in class participation, increase in grades, increase in collaboration, and increase in content that is covered. If those four criteria are not being met, I will need to modify what I am doing and adjust how I am using Edmodo with my students. Hopefully, all goes to plan. When the bumps in the road occur, we will take a look at what is working and what is not, and adjust from there.

Part IV:

Research has given me a whole new look on how I view learning in the 21st century. The biggest piece of information that has stood out to me came from *21st century learning and learners.*

Learners use skills, resources, and tools to:

1. Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge

2. Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new

situations, and create new knowledge

3. Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of

our democratic society

4. Pursue personal and aesthetic growth

This piece of information hits the nail on the head for my personal understanding. It has reshaped that way I think, the way I act, and the way I approach learning. I have always thought that I had the answers to everything my students need. When in reality, I am far from it. I need to not only continue to push my students, but push myself. The more I challenge myself, the more I will be challenging my students.

After reading the pros and cons to Edmodo, I know that I have found enough information supporting this piece of technology to where it will be safe and effective for all my learners. *Edmodo-in-the-classroom* goes through and explains how Edmodo works, and the different uses it can have in a classroom.

In teaching, the topic of assessment, questions, environment, and discipline often come up. When going through this Web 2.0 class, I have realized and came to the conclusion that as long as I am doing what I can to create a positive learning environment for my class then everything else will come hand in hand. Creating a positive learning environment forces me as a teacher to commit to a constant improvement plan in how I ask essential questions, how I continue to grow in my content knowledge, and how I continue to improve my assessment. Going into those four items that were listed above with a growth mindset will allow me to reach all my learners and grow as a teacher. There is absolutely no time in education to be content with where you are as a teacher and if this class has taught me anything, it has been that approaching education with a growth mindset that is willing to adapt and change to today’s world.

References

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